

1 immeasurable technical assistance to help us build our  
2 organization.

3           In short, the casino industry knows that  
4 good communities just don't happen. They need to be  
5 built, and I'm proud to live in a town where the  
6 industry not only has taken up that challenge, but has  
7 supported its employees in doing the same, and at the  
8 end of the day, that's the kind of community that I'm  
9 very proud to go home and say that I fall asleep in.

10           Thank you very much.

11           CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

12           Joan Verplank.

13           MR. LEONARD: Yes, Madame Chairwoman. My  
14 name is Jim Leonard. I'm Vice President of Government  
15 Relations for the State Chamber. Unfortunately Joan  
16 was unable to be here this evening. So I'm going to  
17 be filling in in her place.

18           CHAIRMAN JAMES: Welcome.

19           MR. LEONARD: I thank you all for the  
20 opportunity to be here today, this evening.

21           I appear before you on behalf of our board  
22 of directors and the over 1,300 members of the State

1 Chamber of Commerce. I appreciate, as I said, the  
2 opportunity to speak on this important issue.

3 As a statewide organization with members  
4 in virtually every community, we look at the industry  
5 with an eye towards the impact felt by the entire  
6 state. It is with that focus that I appear before you  
7 this evening.

8 Our state has changed dramatically over  
9 the last 20 years since gaming has been implemented in  
10 our state. Fortunately the growth that our state has  
11 had and the benefits directly attributed from the  
12 gaming industry have gone hand in hand.

13 I'd like to point out just a few of the  
14 many benefits associated with this industry statewide.  
15 We're talking about over 49,000 jobs, 11,000 jobs  
16 specifically in Atlantic City; an annual wage and  
17 salary payroll of over \$1 billion; and Atlantic City  
18 property taxes of over \$149 million.

19 Like many statistics or like other  
20 statistics, people tend to gloss over these numbers  
21 because of their size and their enormity. So let me  
22 put some face to these specific numbers.

1                   When you and your fellow Commissioners  
2 analyze the impact of gaming on our state, please take  
3 into consideration the thousands of senior citizens  
4 who receive medical assistance through a program we  
5 call PAAD or the Pharmaceutical Assistance for the  
6 Aged and Disabled.

7                   This program, funded almost entirely  
8 through a tax on casino winnings, provides  
9 prescription drugs to income worthy seniors with only  
10 a \$5 copay.

11                  Please also consider the thousands of  
12 income eligible seniors who receive millions of  
13 dollars in energy credits through the Lifeline Program  
14 supported entire from the casino revenue fund. These  
15 credits allow many of our senior citizens to purchase  
16 electricity and natural gas to heat their homes and  
17 light their homes.

18                  Please also consider the thousands of men  
19 and women throughout the state who are employed by the  
20 gaming industry and consider the over 3,000 businesses  
21 throughout the state who do \$1.5 billion worth of  
22 business with the gaming industry. Businesses in

1 every part of the state provide goods and services to  
2 this vital industry, benefits from Sussex County in  
3 the north all the way to Salem County in the south.

4 And also people consider the over 200,000  
5 senior citizens whose property taxes will be frozen  
6 thanks to the gaming industry.

7 The State Chamber urges this Commission to  
8 make a full and fair study of legal gambling in the  
9 United States. Such a study has to give substantial  
10 emphasis to the powerful economic benefits associated  
11 by this industry.

12 I thank you for the opportunity to be here  
13 this evening and offer our continued assistance in  
14 your investigation.

15 Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

17 Scott Ferguson, welcome.

18 MR. FERGUSON: Hi. I'm Scott Ferguson,  
19 Executive Director of the United Way of Atlantic  
20 County, and I appreciate the opportunity to address  
21 the Commission.

22 The United Way of Atlantic County raises